

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
NATIONAL APPLIED RESOURCE SCIENCES CENTER
DENVER FEDERAL CENTER, BUILDING 50
P.O. BOX 25047
DENVER, COLORADO 80225-0047**

In Reply Refer To:
9177 (RS-140)P

March 24, 1997

Information Bulletin No. RS-97-020

To: State Directors

From: Director, National Applied Resource Sciences Center

Subject: Report Prepared by the Peer Review Team on Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Dam Safety Program

Recently, a team from the Association of State Dam Safety Officials (ASDSO) conducted a peer review of the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Dam Safety Program. The review included reviewing the BLM's compliance with the DOI's guidance. This review has been completed, and ASDSO's report documenting their observations, findings, and recommendations is attached for your information. The Phase II report titled "Peer Review of the U.S. Department of the Interior Dam Safety Program of the Bureau of Land Management," was received in limited quantities and therefore we are supplying one copy to each State Office.

Each bureau in DOI will prepare a response for the Commissioner, Bureau of Reclamation, who has lead responsibilities. A BLMwide response is being prepared for our Director by the Protection and Response Group, under the direction of Mr. Bernie Hyde. A workgroup has been formed under the leadership of Mr. Larry Hoovestol (NARSC, RS-140) to prepare the response. The Engineering Advisory Team is working with Mr. Rob Roudabush for engineering input to the response.

The Peer Review Team was critical of all DOI bureaus' attitudes and gave BLM an overall rating of "Seriously deficient or nonexistent - urgently needs improvement." The Peer Review Team provided a valuable service to BLM by identifying several problems in the BLM dam safety program that have arisen from reorganizations and retirements over the past several years. BLM needs to update: manuals and organization charts, training procedures and standards, and especially inventories of BLM-owned dam and assessments of associated risks. The Team also identified some items which BLM

does not necessarily perceive as problems, e.g., a dam safety budget below the activity

level, lack of vertical organizational structure, local priority setting, and BLM "liability" for permitted dams on public lands.

In our response, we will state our disagreement with some of their observations, acknowledge areas where improvements can be made, and will present a plan to correct deficiencies that will make BLM a better steward of our responsibilities. We have been working with your contact for Dam Safety to supply your State's reactions, perhaps more correct information, and to make some easy adjustments in compliance with ASDSO's recommendations.

If you or members of your staff have further questions, please contact Bernie Hyde, WO-360, at (202) 452-5058; Rob Roudabush, WO-880, at (202) 452-7716; Larry Hoovestol, RS-140, at (303) 236-9510; or Joe Kuka, RS-140, at (303) 236-9512.

Lee Barkow

1 Attachment

1 - Peer Review Report (53 pp)

Distribution

Director 300, MIB, Rm 5627

WO-360, LS, Rm 406

NI-101, Reading File

RS-150A, BLM Library

RS-140, J. Kuka

RS140:JKuka:rs:3/21/97:C:\rs97020.ib